

News Release

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For Immediate Release

### **Get Ready to Solarize Montague!**

Montague, MA— April 17, 2012— Last Thursday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) announced that it had selected 17 cities and towns for the Solarize Massachusetts program, from the 31 Green Communities who applied. We're thrilled to hear that the Town of Montague was one of two chosen from the valley for this program, which will offer reduced-cost solar electric systems (also called photovoltaics or PV) to Montague residents and businesses. The outpouring of community support for the Solarize application undoubtedly helped tip the scales for our town. We're calling the program *Solarize Montague*.

On hearing about an opportunity for buying lowered-cost solar power, people watching the Spring Parade from their lawn chairs in Turners Falls literally jumped up to get postcards on *Solarize Montague* from marching energy committee members. Some onlookers were already familiar with the program, having taken the online survey of interest; over 200 residents responded to that survey, most expressing excitement about the possibility of more affordable solar power for their homes.

The price for PV purchased under the Solarize program is reduced because the town will be working with one solar installer who will get a group rate on the solar equipment that each participant buys. Volunteers in town have a marketing plan already in place that also defrays costs to the installer. And as we reach certain total amounts of contracted PV in town, the price will continue to drop, giving participants an incentive to help get the word out and sign up more people. Around late May, when the town and MassCEC decide on the solar installer for Solarize Montague, people will be able to look into signing a contract with the installer and will have until September 30<sup>th</sup> to decide if PV through the Solarize program is a good clean energy fit.

The specifics of the pricing will be available when the solar installer signs a contract with MassCEC. Then we'll also know what financial options the installer offers that will make solar more affordable and limit up-front costs, such as a lease-to-own option or financing opportunities, for people not able to pay for the PV in full. If you can afford to own the PV, your costs will go down beyond the reduced cost price, because of federal and state tax credits and the option to sell the Solar Renewable Energy Credits.

The Solarize Montague core volunteer team will soon make available more detailed information that we know so far about how the program works. We will also answer questions you ask us about the program with a Frequently Asked Questions sheet. The information will be posted and downloadable from the Montague Energy Committee's town website: [http://www.montague.net/Pages/MontagueMA\\_Energy/index](http://www.montague.net/Pages/MontagueMA_Energy/index). We'll let you

know about those updates with postings on the Energy Committee's new Facebook page:

<http://www.facebook.com/EnergyCommitteeMontague>. If you're on our email list, we'll send you the information and updates directly. You can contact us at [MontagueEnergyCommittee@gmail.com](mailto:MontagueEnergyCommittee@gmail.com) to ask to be added to our contact list, to send us questions to include on the FAQ sheet, to request that the solar installer contact you directly to explore your solar power options, and/or to volunteer for the program. Please note that the program does *not* include solar hot water systems.

The core volunteer team for Solarize Montague is: Sally Pick, Solarize Montague Community Solar Coach & Energy Committee member; Pat Allen, Select Board member; Chris Mason, Montague Energy Committee Chair, and Pam Hanold, Montague Energy Committee member. Regarding the Solarize program, Pat Allen said, "I am thrilled that Montague was chosen - our folks are known for their concern for the environment and their enthusiasm for making changes that will benefit their homes and Montague as a whole." 17 community members and 15 community organizations in all have offered to volunteer for the program, helping spread the word and Solarize Montague.

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